Duxbury Clipper
pages 1 and 9
4-27-2016

Shots fired; gunman tased

Random shootings injure two

BY SUSANNA SHEEHAN
CLIPPER EDITOR

Two early morning shootings Sunday in Duxbury have left two men, including a Tobey Garden Street resident, recovering from gunshot wounds and local townspeople in shock from the random acts of violence that happened in the heart of their quiet town.

On Sunday around 1:15 a.m., a 33-year old Marshfield man was driving past Duxbury Town Hall on Tremont Street when he was shot in the abdomen by a shotgun wielding man in a passing car, according to Duxbury police. The victim drove himself to the fire station down the road on Tremont Street to receive help for his injuries. He had shotgun pellets lodged on his left side and lower abdomen and back. He was transported to the South Shore Hospital in Weymouth with non-life threatening injuries and is expected to make a

Continued on page **9**

Continued from page **1**

ries and is expected to make a fully recovery.

With the shooting victim and police at the fire station, that building was turned into a crime scene, according to Duxbury Police Chief Matthew Clancy.

Lucas McPherson allegedly shot at three people in Duxbury Sunday.
Photo courtesy DPD

On duty that night, Police Officer Dennis Pearse saw a car driving past the fire station "that didn't look right," said Clancy. The car approached the fire station around 1:201:30 a.m. and it did a U-turn at Heritage Lane. It then pulled into the parking lot at the Holy Family Church and took off toward Tobey Garden Street. Pearse put his cruiser's blue lights on and gave chase but the suspect, 25-year old Lucas McPherson of Mapleton, ME, "took off at a high rate of speed and in a matter of seconds, the officer lost visual contact," said Clancy.

It was in that short period of time before Pearse caught up to him that McPherson pulled into the driveway of a house on Tobey Garden Street and shot a resident who was just letting his dog out. The man was wounded in the face and the shoulders with shotgun pellets, according to police.

As McPherson was trying to get away in his Chevrolet Impala, Pearse's cruiser blocked him in the driveway while the terrified resident ran over to Pearse, asking him what had happened and saying he'd just been shot. Pearse told him to get back into the house and ordered the suspect out of his car at gunpoint.

According to Clancy, Pearse removed McPherson from the vehicle at gun point and the suspect indicated that he intended "to be compliant" so then Pearse holstered his duty weapon but had his Taser out.

"The suspect continued to follow Pearse's commands and then he came at the officer with a hunting knife," Clancy said. "That's when the officer engaged the victim."
"It was a matter of seconds," he added. "It just unfolded so quickly."

Pearse hit McPherson twice with a Taser and subdued him. A police officer from Kingston arrived on the scene to help with the arrest.

Clancy said he thinks the only reason McPherson didn't shoot Pearse from his car is that he was in the process of reloading his shotgun.

Police recovered a single barreled shotgun and a spent shotgun casing from inside McPherson's car and live shotgun shells from his pocket.

Clancy praised Pearse for his use of non-lethal force but said that the officer would have been within his rights if he had shot McPherson.

"From a training and tactical perspective, use of lethal force would have been authorized and justifiable based on those circumstances as they were unfolding," Clancy told the Clipper Monday. "This could have had a tremendously different result. At the end of the day, it could not have gone any better for us as a department or as a community. We got very fortunate and I am very happy and proud of how all my officers handled it."

Clancy said the victims sustained only "minor injuries." They were "incredibly fortunate," he said. Duxbury Fire Captain Rob Reardon said both victims were transported to the South Shore hospital with non-life threatening injuries. The suspect did not sustain injuries. "The end result speaks for itself," Clancy added. Later on Sunday, when police were preparing to take McPherson to jail, he became violent again and attacked two officers. Clancy said he was brought to Beth Israel Deaconess in Plymouth to be evaluated. On Monday, McPherson was arraigned in Plymouth District Court. According to Duxbury Operations Commander Lieutenant Michael Carbone, McPherson was charged with the following crimes: three counts assault and battery with a dangerous weapon; three counts attempted murder; one count assault with a dangerous weapon; two counts malicious damage to a motor vehicle; one count discharging a firearm within 500 feet of a dwelling; one count of carrying a firearm without a license; two counts of assault and battery on a police officer; one count of resisting arrest; one count of operating a unregistered motor vehicle. He was ordered to undergo a mental health evaluation at Bridgewater State Hospital.

Clancy said he understood from McPherson's family, whom the police contacted in Maine, that the suspect had "a history of mental health issues." According to the family, McPherson has schizophrenia and was not taking his medications for the last two weeks. He has no criminal record in Massachusetts and a minor criminal history in Maine.

Police later learned that McPherson had shot at a third victim on Tobey Garden Street closer to Elm Street. According to Clancy, a 37-year old woman from Pembroke contacted Duxbury police saying that she had passed a car and there had been a loud noise, which she thought was the car backfiring. Her car then started to have mechanical problems but she drove home figuring she'd look into it in the morning. In the daylight, she saw that her car had been shot with a shotgun and then she got in touch with police.

Clancy said that it appeared that McPherson had "no connection" with any of his victims or with Duxbury. His attacks were random.

"This is completely random and completely out of character for our community," Clancy said at a press conference he held Sunday afternoon.

Random violence in Duxbury is not something that Clancy wants his town's residents to worry about it but, he said "that's what I lose sleep over."

"We try to prepare for what we hope will never happen but this is exactly why we do it," he said. "Even crazy things happen here. As a department and as a community, we survived it."

At the weekly meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Selectman Ted Flynn praised the Duxbury police department for "fantastic work in bringing that nut-bag to justice quickly" and the fire department for helping treat the victims.

"They're professionals and they did it under fire," said Flynn.

Selectman Shawn Dahlen said he was especially "impressed" that Pearse, who used to work for the Harbormaster's department, had the presence of mind to use his Taser and not his gun.
